

Best Practices in Social Media, Marketing, and Safe Messaging  
Track: Public Health Communications

A “Building Media Relations and Social Marketing Campaign” Checklist/Task List:

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<input type="checkbox"/> <b>STEP 1</b>	Identify what media outlets you have in your area: print, radio, TV, online.
<input type="checkbox"/> <b>STEP 2</b>	Locate the names and contact information for the outlet’s editor/program manager/director. Set up a meeting, which will likely happen singly.
<input type="checkbox"/> <b>STEP 3</b>	Bring handouts on your public health issue, and, in particular, the handout on good reporting tactics for suicide coverage. Discuss. Also, ask if there’s a possibility for future preventative messaging by this media outlet.
<input type="checkbox"/> <b>STEP 4</b>	During your meeting, create a list of best practices for your staff to follow to give the media outlet what THEY need. Designate one staff person from your office to be the official contact for media staffers.
<input type="checkbox"/> <b>STEP 5</b>	Assemble a social marketing team to create a prevention program’s social marketing campaign. Decide who is leading the campaign, who makes up the team, and their individual roles to plan and complete a marketing campaign.
<input type="checkbox"/> <b>STEP 6</b>	Following the principals to create an effective social marketing campaign, plan the campaign together, adding all the necessary details for a good campaign. If necessary, get training or a consultant to lead you through this process.
<input type="checkbox"/> <b>STEP 7</b>	Launch the campaign, and remember the media relationships you set up in advance—how are they contributing to the campaign’s success?
<input type="checkbox"/> <b>STEP 8</b>	With the campaign over, use the data and the measuring tool for success that you created in advance to analyze the campaign’s results. What did/did not work?
<input type="checkbox"/> <b>STEP 9</b>	Share your experience with others so other communities can benefit from your story, and improve their media relations and capacity to have highly successful social marketing campaigns.
<input type="checkbox"/> <b>STEP 10</b>	Identify if the team should disband, or create a new campaign on this public health topic. Or, should the campaign be about a different public health problem?
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## **Description of the STEP purpose and sub-steps:**

STEP 1: What media outlets are available? How many of them are tribally owned? What is the existing level of relationships between clinical staff and the media? Are they a strong partner? How much cultivation have you put into creating strong media relationships?

STEP 2: There typically is a single decision-maker who handles editorial content for publication and/or broadcast. Their title can be editor, publisher, general manager, or station manager. You want to meet with the person who sets office policy, decides on editorial content, and who likely will be on staff for a long time. While it would be easiest to meet with multiple media contacts at once, be aware that due to staff shortages and the nature of media work, their time is short. You will likely have to schedule individual meetings with each media outlet.

STEP 3: At your meeting, you will have the clinical staff lead, perhaps a tribal leader, and the one person you have pre-designated to be the official media contact (a tribal administration staffer, a clinical staffer, etc.) for all media outlets. You will have handouts on one specific public health issue that are non-technical in nature and brief, but most importantly you will have the handout on how media should best report on suicides when they happen. Put on the agenda a discussion about how this media outlet can produce a prevention or education campaign on a public health issue. What do they need from you? How can you save time, money, and resources for the both of you, and make such a media campaign happen? Talk and listen.

STEP 4: During the media staff meetings, you will be developing a list of best practices for your clinical staff to follow in order to give the media what they need for promotional coverage of events, like Open House Day at the clinic, or coverage of an event, like the Children's Mental Health Awareness Day Powwow. Make sure all staff knows there is only one person who deals with media inquiries, and all incoming phone calls and queries go to that person alone.

STEP 5: When you decide to create a social marketing campaign, you might find it useful to create a social marketing team. There should be one person leading this team to keep it organized, make the major decisions, and keep meetings organized. Add other effective team members and make sure they have a clear role to fill and that their skills and experience best fit that role. Set up how often the team will meet.

STEP 6: Next, create the social marketing plan following good organizing principles. If your experience in this area is new, you might want to hire a consultant for necessary technical assistance or attend training in how to create a social marketing plan. It's not just about making a brochure—social marketing requires careful planning to do well.

STEP 7: Once the plan is created, then launch the campaign. Of course, your media relationships are critical here. Perhaps the media has a strong role in the social marketing campaign, and you will have set the groundwork far in advance to give your event or campaign the media attention that it deserves and increase the likelihood of getting noticed.

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STEP 8: The social marketing campaign is over. The team and/or the campaign director obtain the data to determine success, and the results are analyzed. What worked? What didn't work? What surprises were there? What's next?

STEP 9: Leverage those new media relations to share the success with them and the community. Consider presenting at a conference to share your experience with others. Analyze the media's role in this campaign: is there room for improvement?

STEP 10: With the campaign over, the social marketing group would likely disband. There is the possibility of other social marketing campaigns to impact another public health crisis, or change public policy on a health issue, or create a new campaign on suicide prevention. Remember that volunteers and staff can suffer from burnout, so new members of a social marketing group might strengthen your capacity to grow and build skills in others so you can avoid the problem that only a few staff members have the knowledge to plan and launch a social marketing campaign.